

CHAPTER XI

CATHERINE'S LAST EMBASSY TO FLORENCE

" NOD fu adempito 11 deaiderlo mio dl dare la vita per la verita, e per la dolce Spooa di Crleto. Ma lo Sposo eterno mi fece una grande beffa Onde lo ho da plangere, perocche tanta e stata la moltitudine delle mie iniquitadi, che io non merita che il sangue mio desae vita, ne alluminaaaae le mentj accecate, nfe pacificasse il figliuolo col padre, ne murasse una pletra col sangue mio nel corpo miatico della santa Chiesa " — St. Catherine, letter 495 (96).

IN spite of the rupture of the negotiations in October and the violation of the interdict at Florence, neither party had entirely abandoned the hope of a compromise. The financial position of the Florentines was little better than that of the Church, and their unity was more apparent than real. Before Fra Raimondo left Tuscany, Niccolo Soderini had come to Siena and assured him that the majority of the Florentines sincerely desired peace, but were being prevented by the action of the minority who held the government. The remedy he suggested was that the religious citizens should make common cause with the captains of the Parte Guelfa, and deprive these few of their offices, as enemies to the public good, the " admonishing" of four or six of such persons being in his opinion sufficient.¹ The friar repeated this conversation to the Pope, but without any immediate result.

Simultaneously with the Pope's return to Rome from Anagni, Friar John of Basle, an Augustinian hermit, came to Florence. In spite of the resolution previously taken not to discuss peace Gregory had revoked all his processes, he was allowed with the Eight, to whom he proposed that the ;s should choose Piombino or Viterbo or Pisa, as a a general congress to be assembled.² The Pope's n at this time is vividly pictured in a brief to his

III. vi. 28 (§ 422). ⁸ Gherardi, preface to the *Anommo Florentine*, p. 237.